



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Marketing and
Regulatory
Programs

Animal and
Plant Health
Inspection Service

International Services

U.S. Mission to the European Union
Boulevard du Regent, 27
1000 Brussels, Belgium
tel: 011.32.2508.27.62

April 11, 2001

Dr. Alejandro Checchi-Lang
Director Food Safety
European Commission
Health & Consumer Protection Directorate-General
Rue de la Loi, 86
1040 Brussels

Dear Alejandro:

I very much appreciate your taking my call during your well deserved holiday in Barcelona. The Department, as well as this office, greatly appreciates the open channels of communication and the developments and decisions by the Commission and the Standing Veterinary Committee. Our ability to communicate freely is vital to facilitating the decision-making process.

As per our conversation this morning I am transmitting our current request to your staff here in Brussels. The Department is very interested in the depth of the material you can provide relative to the specific points outlined in Dr. Torres letter of the 2nd of April and repeated here below. Additionally it is of the utmost importance that we receive the requested information by April 20, 2001. Of course any assistance this office can provide is freely offered.

We are encouraged that the FMD situation appears to be stabilizing in most of the Community. We are considering scaling back our import restrictions from Member States or areas which have remained unaffected, but would appreciate receiving adequate supporting documentation prior to taking any such actions. As soon as this information is received, we can consider it in our evaluations as we discuss further actions.

While we believe that the actions we have taken to date have been justified based on the possible risk, we do not want to maintain these restrictions for any longer than necessary. As I mentioned above, we must have this information as soon as possible. If we have this information no later than April 20, we can consider it as we finalize our next steps. If no information is received, certain countries or areas may remain under import restrictions. We realize that this time frame is rather short, especially with the Easter holiday, but given both our interests in resolving some of these issues believe that this should be adequate time.

We have received information directly from various Member States. Any additional data which can be supplied, both for these Member States but more specifically for those which have not provided any information, will be most helpful.



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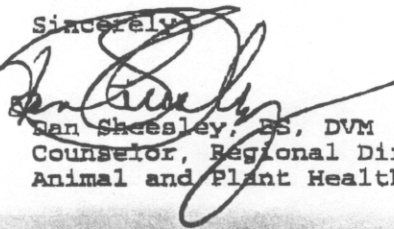
As a reminder, the following list of information was requested in our previous letter. While we have either received copies through your services or otherwise have access to the Community legislation which has been published, we would like to obtain the other pieces of information as requested:

- (1) outbreak history in the Member State or region;
- (2) complete information on Community legislation in force to control spread of disease among Member States, including information on limitations that were identified in community legislation in force at the time of the outbreak, changes made to address these limitations, enforcement processes to implement the changes and enforcement of compliance;
- (3) information on surveillance or control measures implemented by individual Member States in addition to Community legislation;
- (4) statistics on trade in live animals and high-risk animal products within the Community since January 2001;
- (5) traceback results for animals moving from affected areas;
- (6) information on practices which might serve to introduce disease (e.g., garbage feeding of swine), surveillance of those practices and recent or planned legislative changes that might affect these practices;
- (7) mechanisms in place to assure compliance with Community and Member States legislation, as well as mechanisms to identify and correct failures in the safeguarding system; and
- (8) vaccination practices and vaccination records for the region as applicable.

As stated initially, any future actions we take will be based on the fact that the FMD situation appears to be stabilizing. If the disease starts to spread rapidly or appears to present undue risks, the import restrictions on the entire Community will remain in place until such time as the situation is stabilized.

I trust this communicates our position and will allow your services to provide the required information within the short time frame. Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,



Dan Sheesley, BS, DVM
Counselor, Regional Director
Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service

Cc:

Alfonso Torres, Deputy Administrator Veterinary Services
Angel Cielo, Deputy Administrator International Services
Mary Revelt, Agriculture Minister-Counselor, US Mission to the EU
Chester Gipson, Associate Deputy Administrator Veterinary Services
Peter Fernandez, Associate Deputy Administrator International Services
Lisa Ferguson, Director, Sanitary Issue Management Team for Europe
Farouk Hamdy, Associate Director, Animal Health Programs